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IDENTITY PHAUXNETICS

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
English Composition:
Applied Linguistics and
Teaching English as a Second Language

by
Nathan Thomas Jones
December 2015

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A Thesis
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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the construction of identity and authenticity through sociophonetic variation, focusing on British Hip Hop artist Amy Winehouse. Prior work on British vocal artists' phonetic variation has relied upon regional categorical frameworks (Trudgill, 1983; Carlsson, 2001) and found variation to be evidence of production errors and speakers' misidentification of targeted speech patterns, resulting in summative interpretations of conflict between speakers' discreet identities and speech pattern categories. More recent work has attended to linguistic processes within cultural movements influenced but not strictly delimited by sociolinguistics' canonical categories of region, class, race, etc. Within the context of the Hip Hop cultural movement, which demands members maintain authenticity via its mantra of *keepin' it real*, scholars have described processes by which authenticity is redefined and re-localized (Pennycook, 2007), emphasized the performative process of the construction of identity rather than the categorical delineation of identity (Alim, 2009), explicated the construction of authenticity within Hip Hop as inextricable from Hip Hop's roots in the Black American Speech Community (Alim, 2006), and shown how linguistic processes mediate the markedness of artists' Whiteness as they construct authenticity within Hip (Cutler, 2007). This work applies sociophonetic analytic tools to sung and spoken speech informed by indexical theory. Through indexical theory, the construction of identity is examined via the employment of variants that do not convey fixed meanings but instead create complex fields of

possible meaning (Eckert, 2008). The variables examined include postvocalic contexts of the liquids /l/ and /r/ and intervocalic instances of /t/. Findings indicate that Winehouse's use of non-rhotic postvocalic /r/ in spoken language, rhotic postvocalic /r/ in singing language, glottal [ʔ] intervocalic /t/ in spoken language, intervocalic /t/ as [r] in singing language, and categorical use of vocalized postvocalic /l/, demonstrates a negotiation between a Hip Hop identity and a White British non-posh identity. Her spoken and singing language represent a re-localizing of Hip Hop's demand for authenticity within Winehouse's British context. Findings indicate that phonetic features can index a redefinition of authenticity as forms of talk, such as Hip Hop, gain ownership in new contexts.

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CHAPTER ONE

CONFERENCE PAPER PROPOSAL

This paper investigates how sociophonetic variation indexes authenticity and affiliation with Hip Hop within the British context, specifically focusing on British Hip Hop affiliated vocalist Amy Winehouse. Previous studies of British popular music artists' phonetic variation have worked within rigid regional categorical frameworks (Trudgill, 1983; Carlsson, 2001) and understood phonetic variation as evidence of production error, misidentification of target speech patterns, and conflict between identity categories. However, recent research has attended to linguistic processes within cultural movements not bounded by sociolinguistics' canonical categories. Within the context of the global Hip Hop cultural movement, which places high value on the maintenance of authenticity via its mantra of *keepin' it real*, scholars have examined processes of redefinition and re-localization of authenticity (Pennycook, 2007), emphasized the performative process rather than categorical delineation of identity (Alim, 2009), explicated the origins of authenticity within Hip Hop as inextricable from its origins within the Black American Speech Community (Alim, 2006), and shown how linguistic processes mediate the markedness of Whiteness within Hip Hop to maintain artists' authenticity (Cutler, 2007). The current paper applies sociophonetic analytic tools informed by indexical theory to examine phonetic variation in Amy Winehouse's spoken language in an interview context and her

singing language in the recorded album context. The variables examined include postvocalic contexts of the liquids /l/ and /r/. Findings indicate that Winehouse's use of non-rhotic postvocalic /r/ in spoken language, rhotic postvocalic /r/ in singing language, and categorical use of vocalized postvocalic /l/ demonstrates a negotiation between a Hip Hop identity and a White British non-posh identity. Her spoken and singing language represent a re-localizing of Hip Hop's demand for authenticity within Winehouse's particular British context. Findings indicate that phonetic features can index a redefinition of authenticity as forms of talk, such as Hip Hop, gain ownership in new contexts.

CHAPTER TWO

LIQUID FLUIDITY

Identity Phauxnetics in the Singing and Speech of Amy Winehouse

This paper explores the sociophonetic variation of British vocalist Amy Winehouse, specifically focusing on her production of liquids, with the purpose of understanding how overlapping indexical fields work to perform an authentic identity affiliated with Hip Hop within the British Hip Hop context. In both our academic and popular understandings, when speakers employ phonetic variations associated with social categories inconsistent with our perception of the speaker's group membership, our interpretations often center around issues of inauthenticity, i.e., they're "faking" or more problematically, "passing" or "appropriating" another's manner of speech. This paper seeks to demonstrate how we might reinterpret speakers' employment of sociophonetic variation as evidence of the sophisticated construction and communication of identity through indexicality and away from interpretations of such variation as inauthentic "phaux-netic" impersonation or appropriation. The complexity of real language use as an intercommunicative social act defies simplistic abstraction into categories based on unidimensional demographics. While sociolinguistics has come a long way from the ideal-based generative tradition, it must resist the generative impulse that drives rigid categorical conceptualizations of phonetic variation. This paper argues that "phauxnetics" should be seen not as impersonation and not as evidence of error or failure, but instead as evidence of

the creativity and productive flexibility speakers and the complexity and permeability of the identities they construct through language. Rather than asking “to whom does this pattern belong?” I suggest we instead ask: Should any set of phonetic forms be conceptualized as “belonging” to any of us to the exclusion of others, or should we refigure our metaphors away from possession and towards performance? This examination of Winehouse’s production of liquids provides a case study of how one speaker navigates overlapping indexical fields within a British Hip Hop cultural context that places a complex demand for its group members to authentically perform authenticity.

As Hip Hop has become a global cultural movement, it has had to reconcile its mandate of *keepin’ it real* with the reality that doing so means different things in different contexts. The incorporation of linguistic traits associated with Hip Hop by those outside of the Black American Speech Community (BASC) poses one of the most salient challenges to artists seeking to navigate Hip Hop’s demand for authenticity while yet conforming to the norms of Hip Hop language use. Learning to employ specific patterns of language use plays a central role in the process of socialization into the membership of any community, and through such socialization, members in turn demonstrate and communicate group membership (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Though this is true for every community of practice, it is a particularly salient issue within the Hip Hop community because its particular, creative use of language significantly defines and distinguishes it as a musical genre and cultural movement. As Alim (2006)

highlights, Hip Hop artists and those who listen to and affiliate with its music maintain a high level of awareness of its language. As a fundamental tenant of its genre, Hip Hop demands individual linguistic creativity and diversity (Alim, 2006). In addition, because the roots of Hip Hop's linguistic identity were formed in the BASC, Hip Hop is necessarily aware of and often actively working to forward itself against deep-seated issues of language ideology, power, and politics. The language use of the BASC continues in constant tension against the prescripts and prejudices of the White American Speech Community's (WASC) insistent belief in the preeminence and supremacy of its own linguistic patterns. This continues in defiance of many decades of sociolinguistic research that has explicated both the differences *and* coequality of the language variants employed by the BASC and WASC (Alim, 2006). It is perhaps in large part due to this ongoing political-linguistic struggle that Hip Hop demands its artists maintain authentic connection to their linguistic roots while simultaneously policing the membership of its community against community outsiders who are often interpreted as unwelcome intruders and unscrupulous cultural appropriators.

If language is understood as playing a fundamental role in forming and communicating our identities (Bucholtz and Hall, 2004 as cited in Alim, 2009), then it is unsurprising that the language patterns of the BASC are necessarily intertwined with Hip Hop and in fact inseparable from the genre conventions and other non-linguistic features that make up Hip Hop as a multifaceted cultural movement. In adjacency to this context, the academic question that tends to

arise is how to categorize persons from outside the BASC who employ phonetic traits associated with members of that community, i.e., are they or are they not “speakers” of its language (Hatala, 1976, Labov, 1980 as cited in Cutler, 1999)? Cutler (2002), for example, investigated whether White Hip Hop artists could *pass*¹ as Black in a perceptual study conducted among New York college students. These lines of inquiry arise from the influence of the generative linguistic tradition which defines language as an abstracted system derived from ideal speakers and listeners. This perspective consequently ignores “Differences *between* speakers of a given language,” (Foulkes and Docherty, 2006). Thus, even within sociolinguistic research, the impetus has often been to think in terms of distinct systems divided into distinct categories populated by speakers who either do or do not belong within such categories, though such habits have been increasingly rejected (Sweetland, 2002).

While the language of the BASC did provide the context of Hip Hop’s germination, Hip Hop has since been transplanted into many different cultural contexts. This reality has necessitated new frameworks of analysis to account for language use that defies rigid categorization along demographic lines. One such productive framework was posited by Silverstein (2003) as the theory of indexicality which finds that linguistic variables do not only correlate with particular social categories but also allow speakers to employ a range of differing

¹ I use this problematic term because it is the one Cutler (2002) employs in both describing and conducting the perceptual study component of her work on the language of White Hip Hop artists.

variables to construct and communicate meaning through interlocutors' associations of those variables with different social categories. Through such a tool, speakers are able to employ linguistic variants associated with Hip Hop language to communicate affiliation with and belonging to Hip Hop identity. Somewhat ironically paralleling the generative impetus, the question that has tended to arise within the Hip Hop community and among cultural critics is whether speakers of other languages or other variants of English can employ linguistic variables associated with Hip Hop while maintaining their own authenticity through the mandate of *keepin' it real*. Pennycook (2007) applied an indexical lens to argue that Hip Hop variables are used within a process of redefinition of authenticity within contexts that re-localize the global Hip Hop cultural movement. Thus Hip Hop culture puts down new roots in new cultural soils making full indexical use of both local and global associations to create new webs of meaning that authentically determine what it means to be *keepin' it real* in a local context in conversation with Hip Hop's broader global context (Pennycook, 2007; Pennycook & Mitchell 2009).

Alim (2009) described the re-localizing of Hip Hop's global cultural movement as evidencing the performative linguistic processes through which identities are formed and communicated. Thus, for Alim, identities should be understood as fluid and permeable in an ongoing process of recreation. Previous research on British musical artists' employment of linguistic variables has largely fallen short in their analyses on this point. Though important patterns have been

found of shifting away from typical British patterns towards a complex of American patterns (Trudgill, 1983) and then back towards British patterns again (Carlsson, 2001), such studies have tended to see such variation as a conflict between differing identities that thus understands identity as a static, prefigured construct (Trudgill, 1983).

Methods

This project analyzed Winehouse's language in two contexts: (1) a recording of the song "You Know I'm No Good" and (2) a 2004 interview of Winehouse on *Friday Night with Jonathan Ross*. Both recordings were obtained from YouTube as compressed mp3 files. The files were segmented into clips to isolate contexts containing tokens of postvocalic /l/ and postvocalic /r/. These clips were then processed through Praat to produce spectrograms for analysis to determine whether the liquids were vocalized.

Vocalization of /l/ was determined based upon a complex of aural perception, lack of diminishment of the amplitude of the waveform, and clarity of the formant distribution. Non-vocalized /l/ required a diminishment of the clarity of the distribution of the formants in addition to a clear reduction in the amplitude of the waveform relative to the surrounding vowels.

R-lessness (vocalization) and *r-fullness* were determined by considering the reduction or maintenance of the third formant, the reduction or maintenance of the amplitude of the wave form, and aural perception.

Findings

Postvocalic /l/

Table 2-1, below, includes the 15 tokens of postvocalic /l/ that occurred in “You Know I’m No Good.” All tokens were determined to be vocalized. Table 2-2, below, includes the 14 tokens of postvocalic /l/ that occurred in the interview, 11 of which were vocalized and three of which were velarized as [ɫ]. Representative spectrograms appear below as Figure 2-1 showing “trouble” of line 11 of “You Know I’m No Good” and as Figure 2-2 showing “folk” of line 19 of the interview.

Table 2-1

Vocalized Tokens of Postvocalic /l/ in “You Know I’m No Good”

Word Token (line #)			
myself (9)	told (11)	trouble (11)	rolled (2)
myself (22)	told (24)	trouble (24)	skull (2)
myself (34)	told (36)	trouble (36)	there’ll (20)
myself (38)	told (40)	trouble (40)	

Table 2-2

Tokens of Postvocalic /l/ in Interview

vocalized /l/ (line #)		/l/ as [ɫ] (line #)
call (15)	well (32)	people (1)
album (18)	well (41)	people (25)
folk (19)	simple (44)	already (74)
heartfelt (22)	mold (70)	-
all (28)	style (73)	-
myself (28)	-	-

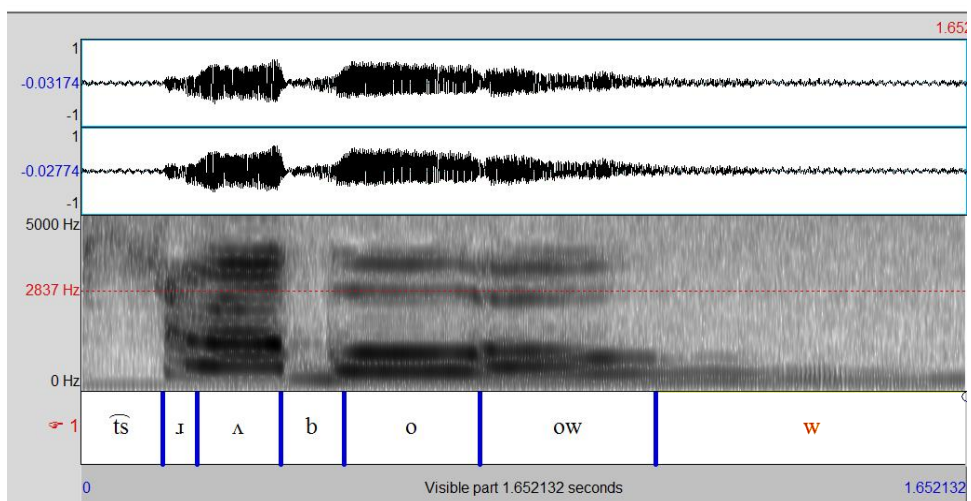


Figure 2-1. "Trouble" of line 11 (song).

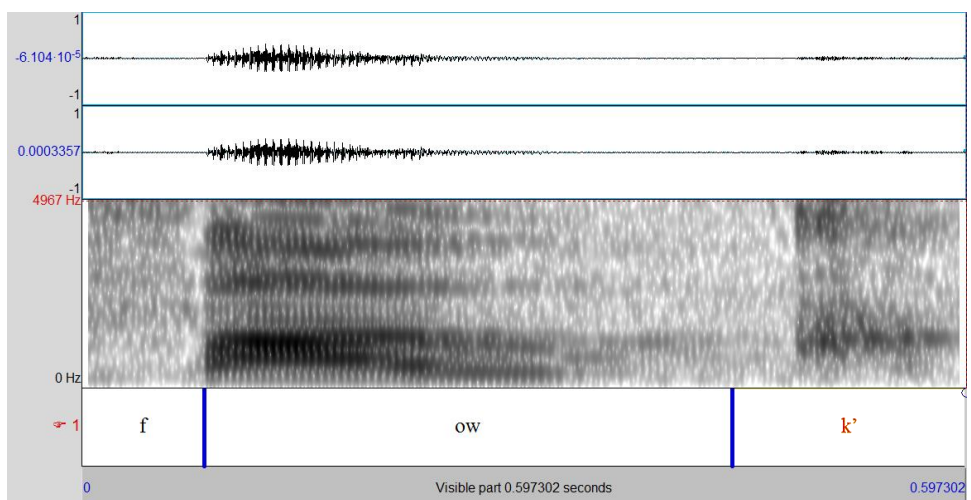


Figure 2-2. "Folk" of line 19 (interview).

Postvocalic /r/

Table 2-3, below, includes all tokens of postvocalic /r/ in “You Know I’m No Good.” Nine tokens occurred as r-full and 10 tokens were vocalized and r-less. In the interview, nine tokens of vocalized r-less /r/ occurred and two r-full tokens occurred, shown in Table 2-4, below. Tokens that occurred within a word but which initiated a following syllable of the same word were omitted, of which there were three tokens, one in the song and two in the interview, all of which were r-full. Figure 2-3 is a spectrogram of “bitter” (line 17, “You Know I’m No Good”). Figure 2-4 is a spectrogram of “floor” (line 21, “You Know I’m No Good”). Figure 2-5 is a spectrogram of “guitar” (line 28, interview).

Table 2-3

Tokens of Postvocalic /r/ in “You Know I’m No Good”

r-full		vocalized r-less /r/	
bar (1)	bitter (19)	downstairs (1)	more (20)
hurt (1)	carpet (30)	your (2)	floor (21)
shirt (2)	worst (32)	you’re (5)	for (21)
door (7)	first (33)	your (6)	we’re (27)
you’re (17)	-	Moore (8)	your (29)

Table 2-4

Tokens of Postvocalic /r/ in Interview

r-full	vocalized r-less /r/	
there (19)	are (15)	you're (44)
or (34)	heartfelt (22)	driver (58)
-	guitar (28)	there (75)
-	never (32)	heard (88)
-	never (44)	-

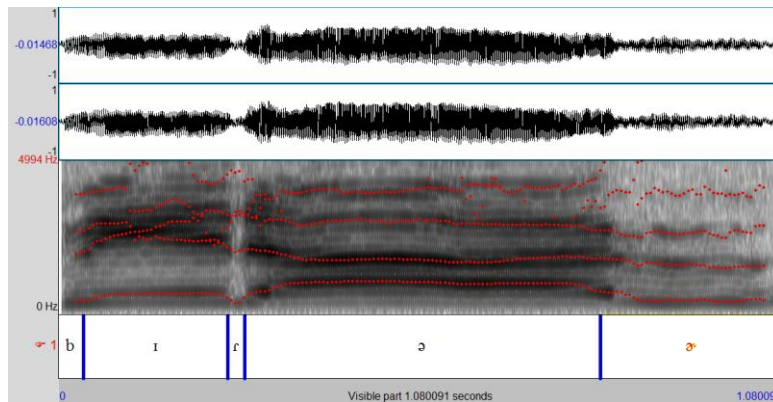


Figure 2-3. "Bitter" of line 19 (song).

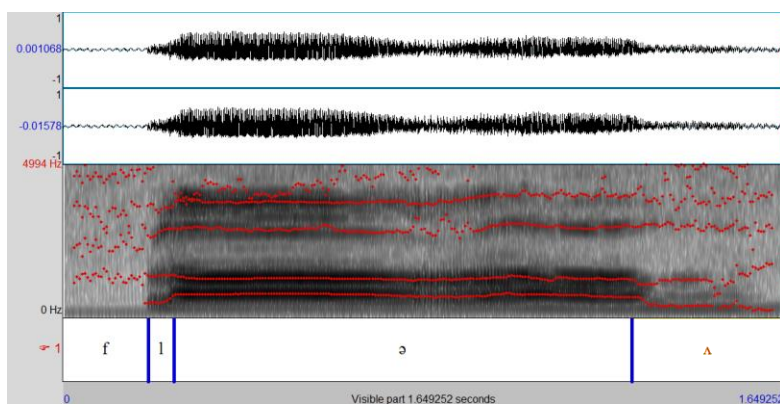


Figure 2-4. “Floor” of line 21 (song).

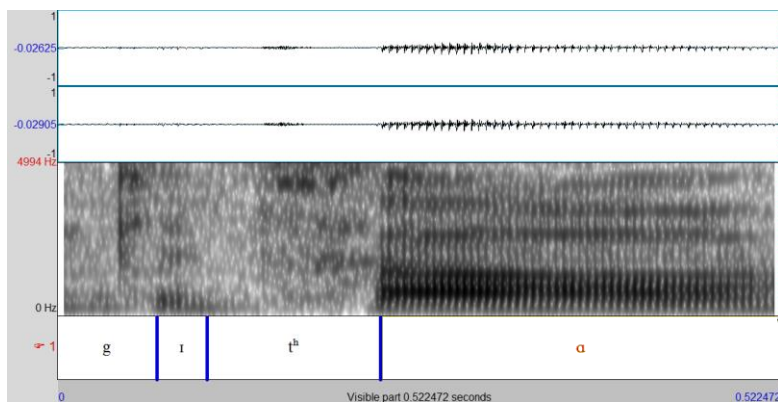


Figure 2-5. “Guitar” of line 28 (interview).

Discussion

In the postvocalic context examined, Winehouse displays a strong tendency towards vocalization of the liquid /l/. In the interview, she produces vocalized versus velarized variants in a ratio of 11/3. In the singing context, she employs only vocalized /l/. As these patterns demonstrate a preference towards

vocalization of /l/, it is important to note that such vocalization does not carry prestige within the dominant British English perspective (Santipolo, 2000; Taylor & Walter, 1998; Wells, 1984). By employing this variable, Winehouse maintains consistency and authenticity between her singing and speaking styles in the contexts analyzed, and she simultaneously constructs herself not as “posh” but as “common,” which Johnathan Ross expressly comments upon in the interview to the scandalized delight of his audience. Winehouse thus indexes a kind of British street-consciousness by demonstrating affiliation with the lower-socioeconomic categories with whom vocalized /l/ is associated. As Pennycook (2007) might anticipate, this represents a re-localizing of Hip Hop’s demand for authenticity within Winehouse’s particular British context. As it happens, however, the vocalization of /l/ also corresponds to a speech variant of the BASC that is associated with and thus indexes Hip Hop identity. Winehouse’s employment of /l/ thus functions within an overlapping linguistic space that seamlessly re-localizes Hip Hop within her British context while simultaneously allowing her to index affiliation with broader Hip Hop identity by using a recognizably English Hip Hop pronunciation style. Combined, these factors would seem to essentially inoculate her against criticism of inauthenticity or appropriation and allow her to evade the kind of explicit stance identification as a non-Black Hip Hop artist that Cutler (2007) found to be necessary for White Hip Hop artists. However, the picture grows more complicated when the liquids /l/ and /r/ are considered in conjunction.

Unlike her employment of a consistently vocalized /l/, Winehouse produces a relatively even balance of r-full /r/ and vocalized r-less /r/ in her singing. In the interview, however, she is much more likely to produce a vocalized r-less /r/ than an r-full /r/ in a ratio of 9/2. It is important to note the data set is small and the contexts very different, so it would be inappropriate to draw strong contrastive conclusions (Di Paolo and Yaeger-Dror, 2011). However, her singing production's contrast from her expected British pronunciation patterns is of significance. It is possible that her more rhotic production of /r/ represents an Americanized pattern in keeping with that observed in previous studies of British popular music (Trugill, 1983), but those patterns had also recently been observed to have shifted back towards more typically British patterns (Carlsson, 2001). Such an Americanized shift might index affiliation with American Hip Hop by expressing an Americanized pronunciation of /r/, though it wouldn't be expressing a typically American *Hip Hop* variant of /r/. This then might suggest that Winehouse is in fact producing an atypically r-full /r/ to highlight her non-Black status as Cutler (2007) has observed to be employed by White American rappers. If her purpose was to create such an overtly non-Black indexical link, it would demonstrate how even within a localized iteration of Hip Hop where pronunciations of /l/ and /r/ happen to overlap with typically Hip Hop associated vocalized pronunciations, shifting away from the /r/ associated with the BASC might serve as a necessary marker of Whiteness. The question then would remain of why shift the /r/ pronunciation but not the /l/? Is /r/ perhaps a more

salient marker of Whiteness?

An alternative explanation might lie within Winehouse's particular sub-genre context within Hip Hop. In the interview, Winehouse defines her album as a cross between Jazz and Hip Hop, perhaps creating enough space for herself outside the canonical hip hop genres, e.g., the MC battles of Cutler's (2007) study, that overt phonetic or explicit content marking of Whiteness is not necessary. Were this to be the case, the pressure towards more conservative diction within the Jazz singing genre might pressure Winehouse into a more r-full production pattern to avoid the misinterpretation or unintelligibility of her lyrics. No serious singer wants to end up as comedic fodder the way Elton John's "hold me closer tiny dancer" has become as misinterpretations by sitcom characters like *Friends*' Phoebe Buffay have infamously read as "hold me closer Tony Danza." A typically British /r/ vocalization can thus be interpreted very differently in an American context, with an arguably negative effect, so perhaps Winehouse's relatively more r-full /r/ production demonstrates her looking towards an American Hip Hop consumer audience within which her own poetic lyrics might otherwise land at the butt-end of sitcom humor.

CHAPTER THREE

IDENTITY PHAUXNETICS

This paper seeks to investigate how sociophonetic variation is employed to index authenticity and affiliation with Hip Hop within the British Hip Hop context, specifically focusing on the vocalist Amy Winehouse. In both academic and popular understandings, when speakers employ phonetic variations associated with social categories inconsistent with perceptions of the speaker's own group membership, interpretations often center around issues of inauthenticity, i.e., they're "imitating" (Trugill, 1983) or more problematically, "passing" (Cutler, 2002) or "appropriating" (Cutler, 2007) another's manner of speech. This paper seeks to demonstrate how we might reinterpret sociophonetic variation as evidence of the sophisticated employment of indexicality to construct and communicate our identities. This approach would move away from interpretations of such variation as inauthentic "phaux-netic" impersonation or appropriation. The complexity of language use defies its abstraction from real usage or its codification into ideal forms. While sociolinguistics has come a long way from the ideal-based generative tradition, this paper seeks to continue that progression by resisting the generative impulse that drives rigid categorical conceptualizations of phonetic variation. As Eckert (2008) argues, "meanings of variables are not precise or fixed but rather constitute a field of potential meanings – an indexical field" (453). Following this logic, this paper approaches

phauxnetics not as impersonation and or as evidence of error or failure, but instead as evidence of speakers' creative flexibility and of the permeability of the identities they construct through language. Rather than asking "to whom does this pattern belong?" this paper seeks to determine: Should any set of phonetic forms be conceptualized as "belonging" to any of us to the exclusion of others, or should we refigure our conceptual metaphors away from possession and towards performance? In the specific case of Amy Winehouse, this question leads this paper to investigate how her sociophonetic variation aligns with and contrasts from "expected" phonetic patterns, how those patterns overlap with other speech communities, and how Winehouse navigates the complex and overlapping indexical fields of her particular Hip Hop context.

Amy Winehouse was infamously known in the British and global media for her wild antics and brusque personality. She should have been known for the artistry and power of her singing, and the poetry of her lyrics. Nonetheless, the personality she cultivated in the media and through her music was only enhanced by her "accent" which hearkened to the stereotyped "Cockney" of her native London. She seemed to doggedly stick to her authentic, highly marked, non-prestigious speech in both song and speech. However, the details of the larger story of her sociophonetic distribution is somewhat more complicated than a first glance or listen might betray, not unlike the complicated artist to whom they belonged. The question of whether any musician's pronunciation is an instance of "phauxnetics" is as complicated as questions of musical authenticity

which from different perspectives simultaneously be interpreted as sampling, stealing, imitation, appropriation, cultural plagiarism, or creative re-imagination. Meanwhile, the use of sociophonetic variation to construct our identities through indexical associations, while often far less salient in the public sphere, is a process common to us all.

Literature Review

Sociophonetics

As the name implies, the field of sociophonetics sits at the nexus of sociolinguistics and phonetics. Foulkes and Docherty (2006) have defined the work of sociophonetics as explaining the “variation in speech that correlates with social factors like speaker gender, age, or social class” (p. 410). Citing Chomsky (1965), they have emphasized the significance of the departure that this direction of inquiry represents from the focus of the generative linguistic tradition. Instead of focusing on a hypothesized “ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogenous speech community,” which ignores “Differences *between* speakers of a given language,” a sociophonetic approach seeks to make sense of the flexibility of different and varying phonological forms that individual speakers employ (p. 410). Following the model pioneered by Labov, sociophonetic research began by exploring how speakers’ use of phonetic variation correlates with social categories, such as race, class, gender, etc. (Foulkes and Docherty, 2006, p. 411). Silverstein (2003) introduced the framework of indexicality to explore how speakers employ a range of variables to construct complex webs of

meaning via those variables' associations with different social categories. Much as politeness theory looks at interaction at an implicative level, so too does indexicality. Rather than working at the level of surface level correlations with categories, indexicality focuses on how speakers employ implicit connections to varying categories to make use of the meanings attached to such categories.

Foulkes and Docherty take sociophonetic indexicality one step further to explore how the systematic variation of speech style is affected by “modes of speech... includ[ing] degree of formality, the nature of the topic, the specific audience, the physical setting in which the speech is taking place, and the pragmatic demands of a particular type of interaction” (p. 411). The investigation of such factors, however, poses particular challenges to the classical laboratory research methods of the field of phonetics. Within such a laboratory environment, many of the factors Foulkes and Docherty seek to explore cannot be readily reproduced, thus necessitating the study of speakers in “the wild” outside of the strict controls of the lab. However, as will be discussed, while some modern researchers have constructed sophisticated experimental models that have successfully demonstrated nuanced patterns of variation within a laboratory setting, many factors require exploration outside the lab. Furthermore, there are many important contexts of language that merit sociophonetic study but defy the controls of laboratory settings, e.g., television, radio, YouTube videos or studio or live-recorded music. When conducting research within such contexts, Di Paolo and Yaeger-Dror (2011) caution against potentially errant comparative analyses

as “even the same speaker on radio and TV news programs can exhibit radically different speech styles” (p. 18). However, when systematically and carefully approached, the challenges of such research can come along with particular benefits, such as the longitudinal assessment of variation without the challenges of maintaining longitudinal research. One example of such a study is Harrington’s (2006) analysis of the speech of Queen Elizabeth. The study focused on fifty years of annually produced broadcasts given at Christmas time. With such a narrow focus, Harrington was able to control for many variables such of the speaker, performative context, medium of delivery, and audience while simultaneously allowing for the comparative analysis of a single influential speaker across a span of half of a century. Following such a model, and in conjunction with the expansion of access via the internet to digitized databases of audio and video recordings, it is now possible to analyze a broad diversity of legacy data that precedes the inception of the field of sociophonetics. Though not so far removed in time, this paper undertakes such an effort in analyzing the speech of Amy Winehouse by making use of recordings made available through YouTube.

Analyses of Phonetic Variation in British Popular Music

One study that takes up an older data set is Trudgill’s (1983) analysis of 1960’s era British musical groups, including the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. In his analysis of their singing-speech production, Trudgill found variation within both groups’ vowels in patterns more consistent with American vowel forms than

their native British forms. This was particularly evident in the substitution of the American vowel /æ/ in place of the typically British distribution of /a/. This pattern was especially salient in contrast to the particular regional varieties of English spoken by members of both groups which typically share little overlap with American vowel production patterns. Trudgill also found similarly Americanized pronunciations of /r/ and varying distributions of the common British diphthongs [aɪ~ɑɪ~ʌɪ]. The singers produced such diphthongs in a more typically American pattern using the vowel [a], and also employed pronunciations of high frequency words such as *love* via an American pattern of [ə] rather than the more typically British [æ~e] among other shifts towards American pronunciation patterns.

In constructing his analytic framework, Trudgill cites Giles and Smith's (1979) accommodation theory as "go[ing] some way towards accounting for the phenomenon of pop-song pronunciation," but he found its explanatory power lacking to account for the totality of the singers' variation (p. 143). Thus, Trudgill (1983) turns to Le Page's theory of linguistic behavior, which explains the variation in terms of "modification" and its "constraints":

- I. the extent to which we are able to identify our model group.
- II. the extent to which we have sufficient access to the model group and sufficient analytical ability to work out the rules of their behavior.
- III. the strength of various (possibly conflicting) motivations towards one or another model and towards retaining our own sense of our unique identity.
- IV. our ability to modify our behavior (probably lessening as we get older)"

(pp. 145-154).

Trudgill's approach is rooted in the study of behavior modification that is strongly influenced by the generative linguistic and psycho-social behavioral traditions that focus on ideal, abstract pairs of speakers and listeners as part of an abstract system or standard of language. Thus, though his study focuses on singers' variation, the singers are understood as attempting to emulate another speech system in its entirety and Le Page's theory is employed to highlight the singers' limitations in achieving such an endeavor. However, it is this assumption that the singers are attempting to mimic or reproduce a whole phonetic system which is the first fault of Trudgill's approach. As will be subsequently demonstrated, Trudgill's assumptions lead him to interpret the British singers' adoption of elements of American styles of speech not as indexical variations, but as unsuccessful attempts to conform to either the British or the American phonetic systems.

In applying Le Page's first rider, Trudgill characterizes British singers as not having "been especially successful in identifying *exactly which* Americans it is they are trying to model their behavior on" (pp. 145-146). To support this assessment, Trudgill addresses the issues of the musicians' use of /r/ and their employment of "grammatical features associated with Southern and Black dialects (p. 147). If they were to maintain consistency with the regional varieties of English from which they originated, none of the British musicians would typically use /r/ in postvocalic contexts, nor would they employ the grammatical

features Trudgill cites. In their singing, however, they modify their phonetic production to include a postvocalic /r/ from one American system, yet they modify their grammatical variation from a second American speech community distinct from the first. Trudgill's assumes that the singers attempt (and fail) to differentiate different American systems and resultantly conflate two different systems in their attempts at replication. Again, this impetus is ironically rooted in the generative understanding of language that preferences a unitary, abstract conceptualization. Thus, Trudgill labels the speakers variations as examples of "error" and "failure"². This rigidly categorical approach seems to extend to Trudgill's understanding of identities as similarly whole categories rather than flexible, overlapping and intersecting collections of ways of being. His title, "Acts of Conflicting Identity", makes this clear from the outset. For Trudgill, users' inclusion of traits from different language varieties represents a conflict between identities, not a synthesis of new identities constructed through the creative use of a variety of

² In this position Trudgill participates in a long sociolinguistic tradition of rigid codification of language systems that stretches back (as Cutler (1999) cites) to Hatala's (1976) work on the language of a 13 year-old White female. Hatala concluded that the speaker studied "spoke" African American Vernacular English (AAVE), i.e., that she had acquired and employed this language system. However, these conclusions were subsequently rejected by Labov (1980) because, in his assessment, the speaker in question had only adopted a salient *subset* of features of AAVE and not the entirety of the AAVE system. Trudgill thus follows the conventions of the field established by Labov and Hatala in conceptualizing particular traits as inseparably belonging to abstracted systems of speech to which speakers either categorically do or do not belong. Importantly, examining variables within a language system represented a significant departure from the generative tradition, but much of its perspective nonetheless persevered.

linguistic resources through a process of indexicality. This perspective appears to soften as Trudgill briefly addresses the importance of the “socially symbolic” function of language. However, he subsequently abandons the explanatory effort citing the inability of “[Le Page’s] theory (or any other), to explain why *particular* (in this case ‘British’ or ‘American’) consonantal, vocalic or other variants are retained, rejected or selected, and not others” (p. 159). He is left to concede that “we therefore await theoretical refinements” (p. 159).

In a study following up on Trudgill’s (1983) work, Carlsson (2001) found that the shift Trudgill observed in the 1960’s era British popular music of employing Americanized pronunciations appears to have reversed. Citing shifts in production of rhotic pronunciation, intervocalic /t/, vowel forms, and other features of British English varieties, Carlsson concludes that within “genuinely British musical genre[s] (in this case Britpop)” singers’ pronunciations are moving away from an Americanized pattern to a more native-like British pattern (167). This conclusion leads Carlsson to interpret language “in modern [British] English music... as an attribute to the actual art form rather than a regional accent” (p. 167). Here, Carlsson moves further away from the generative tradition. While he doesn’t explicitly address issues of indexicality and identity performativity, he makes a significant move in that by not rigidly focusing on speakers’ conformity or discontinuity with their own “regional accents” or targeted American pronunciation patterns. Instead, he moves towards an interpretation of the singers’ language variation as artful, as part of their performative endeavor.

Carlsson successfully updates Trudgill's findings in terms of chronology, but he only begins to address the theoretical refinements Trudgill anticipated. This understanding of language variation as artful and performative is perhaps easier to swallow within the obviously performative context of musical recording and performance, but it is a short bridge thence to indexicality and an understanding of all language users as flexible performers of their own linguistically constructed identities.

Towards a Sociophonetic Approach

In Alim's (2006) extensive treatment of the language of Hip Hop culture, Trudgill's call for refinement is answered, though it comes through a shift in perspective and methodology. In one component of his broader study, Alim applies an experimental methodology³ to assess the subjects' style shifting with interlocutors of varying gender, race, and degree of Hip Hop affiliation to investigate the copula use flexibility of Black youth. The study significantly departs from the Labovian model by employing the "identity characteristics" of the interlocutors as variables affecting subjects' variation. Highlighting the example of one Black, male, Hip Hop affiliated subject, Alim found a negative linear relationship between the subject's frequency of copula use and the degree of similarity between his own identity characteristics and those of his interlocutors. In this accommodative pattern, Alim found that the less connected

³ Alim cites the studies of Labov (1969), Baugh (1979, 1983), Rickford & McNair-Knox (1984) as key references for the design of his study.

to Black, male, and Hip Hop identities the interlocutors were, the more often the subject used copula constructions. Conversely, the more connected to Black, male, and Hip Hop identities his interlocutors were, the more often he used constructions with copula omitted.

Through the application of a variety of methodologies within his larger project, Alim found a consistent pattern of sophisticated style shifting by Hip Hop affiliated Black youth. In his analysis, Alim follows Trugill to demonstrate that the speakers' studied meet the requirements of Le Page's riders⁴ (1) by having identified a target group, (2) by having access to that group, (3) by demonstrating their motivation to learn via their affiliation with Hip Hop, and (4) by demonstrating their ability to modify their linguistic behavior. However, though Alim does not address Silverstein's (2003) theory of indexicality, in addressing Le Page's third rider, Alim (2006) cites subjects as being motivated to join their target speech community in part because of Hip Hop's demand that they convey "street credibility" (p. 124). He argues that "Hip Hop artists assert their linguistic acts of identity in order to 'represent' the streets" (p. 124). Though indexicality isn't mentioned, Alim is clearly working within a similarly functioning interpretive framework that sees phonetic and grammatical variation to function through their

⁴ In citing Le Page, Alim again draws from Baugh's (1979, 1983) work focusing on situational contexts, which itself builds on Labov's (1966, 1972) foundational work on stylistic variation. Alim pointedly rejects Bell's (1984) theory of audience design as "[viewing] stylistic variation as a passive phenomenon" (dismissing Bell's counterarguments on this point) in favor of Le Page and Tabiret-Keller's (1985) framework because he perceives that it better acknowledges speakers' active agency within their variational processes.

associations to particular groups. Through these associations, particular meanings are linked and constructed by the speakers who employ such variables. Thus, for example, the speaker in the experimental study previously described employs variation in his copula use explicitly because copula absence has strong associations with Black and Hip Hop identities. The speaker is able to variably assert the Black, male, and Hip Hop components of his identity by varying his use of constructions including copula absence. By flexing his syntax with different interlocutors to include or exclude copula, the speaker flexes the assertion and construction of his identity to accommodate the identities constructed by his interlocutors.

In his analysis, Alim (2006) asserts the importance of both the variation within and the connection between “Hip Hop Nation Language” (HHNL) and “Black Language” (BL). This represents a significant departure from the conventional perspective that has found HHNL and BL to be essentially indistinguishable (Alim, 2006, p. 76). To explain this contrast in analysis, Alim emphasizes that a diversity of regional language varieties of BL influence Hip Hop artists. In addition, he emphasizes that Hip Hop places a high value on creative linguistic individuality as fundamental to its genre conventions and cultural aesthetic. However, Alim’s (2006) work focuses on a narrowly American spectrum of Hip Hop and assumes that “Hip Hop artists are members of the larger Black American Speech Community” [(BASC)] (p. 124). In contrast, Alim and others’ later works expand their definitions of Hip Hop to include other

American language communities, including White Hip Hop artists, and global contexts comprised by an extensive array of linguistic communities.

One example of such a study is Cutler's (2007) work on the construction of Whiteness within Hip Hop. Cutler's work stems from the observation that Hip Hop functions as "an alternative social reality in which Blackness is normative and Whiteness is marked" (p. 11). Leaving aside Cutler's assumption of White normativity⁵, the markedness of Whiteness within Hip Hop culture does raise important issues for its White participants. This might be of particular significance to the group Cutler studies because they are not expressing a casual affiliation with Hip Hop as music consumers but are participating as rappers in the canonical Hip Hop genre of the MC battle. In this context, Cutler found that if White participants make use of speech patterns associated with the BASC, thus indexing their affiliation with Hip Hop, "[they] must adopt a stance that references their Whiteness" (p. 11). In Cutler's analysis, such a move is necessary to maintaining authenticity, which functions as a fundamental tenant of Hip Hop culture and will be discussed subsequently. Among the strategies Cutler found to be employed were (1) explicit discursive references to the speaker's Whiteness, and (2) the emphasized employment of salient phonological traits associated with the White American Speech Community (WASC), such as the production of /r/ in

⁵ Alim (2006) provides a thorough discussion of how "HHNL exists within a Black Language Space (BLS)—a discursive space where Black Language is the culturally dominant language variety" (p. 101) that provides an important counterpoint to Cutler's (2007) framing which itself serves as an example of the functioning of what Alim terms the White public space.

postvocalic contexts (p. 11). However, Winehouse's music functions within a much different genre position within Hip Hop, and in combination with the phonology of her regional variety of British English, Winehouse's construction of authenticity within her particular context necessarily functions quite differently from that of the White American rappers of Cutler's study.

Hip Hop and Authenticity in Winehouse's British Context

Winehouse unambiguously claims affiliation with Hip Hop. In discussing her first album, for example, she specifically describes *Frank* as being a "straight jazz Hip Hop cross" (line 18). However, like the White rappers of Cutler's study, she is not a member of the BASC. As Cutler highlights, this makes Winehouse's phonological and grammatical choices particularly important if she is to successfully index herself as a member of Hip Hop culture while simultaneously constructing herself as an artist of authenticity because authenticity is a fundamental component of Hip Hop's cultural ideology of *keepin' it real*. This ideology is widely cited within the scholarship on Hip Hop as making primary the values of authenticity and integrity (Pennycook, 2007; Alim, 2006, 2009; Alim & Pennycook, 2007). However, Alim (2006) argues that this authenticity is not abstract but tied to the particular "street-consciousness" born from connection to the Black American Street Culture from which Hip Hop originated. Cutler cites Rickford & Rickford (2000) to define *keepin' it real* as a "mantra exhorting individuals to be true to their roots" (p. 11), so the question that arises is whether authenticity within Hip Hop can be grown from maintaining an authentic

connection to roots that have grown in a cultural soil very different from that of Hip Hop's inception.

In a significant departure from Alim's (2006) work which assumed the belonging of Hip Hop artists to the larger BASC, Alim (2009) argues that Hip Hop has developed into an international, cross-cultural movement characterized by "sets of styles, aesthetics, knowledges, and ideologies... [which] travel across localities," which includes sociophonetic variation associated with and thus indexing Hip Hop identity. However, as Cutler explored in the context of White American rappers, the mixing of identity markers raises questions of authenticity as Hip Hop affiliated musicians negotiate the incorporation of the indexically rich phonetic, grammatical, and lexical elements associated with of Hip Hop culture⁶ with differing local/regional linguistic patterns.

While Winehouse does not belong to the BASC, she does occupy a similarly situated cultural-linguistic space. In America, the language of the BASC exists in constant tension as dominant American prescriptive language standards mistakenly consider it holistically ungrammatical, its features to be errors, and its usage as evidence of educational failure⁷. In Britain, the Cockney speech

⁶ As Le Page would highlight, musicians outside of the BASC employ these linguistic features from often generalized and imprecisely defined notions of the qualities of the BASC that are dependent upon a subset of salient features that don't reflect the nuanced diversity of regional variations within the BASC.

⁷ Alim (2006) frames this as a persistent and pernicious issue of intercultural communication: "Why is it that, despite ample evidence from sociolinguistic studies and theory that different speech communities possess different, yet theoretically equivalent, linguistic rules and rules of language use, BL and

community to which Winehouse belongs occupies a similarly deprecated space. Rampton (2003), in a study on the style-shifting of British youth, argues that Cockney speakers and others' deviation from dominant British language prescriptions continue to index starkly stratified socio-economic and class distinctions. Citing his disagreement with Bradley (1996) and Comaroff & Comaroff (1992) who argue that class distinctions have been eroded by factors such as globalization, Rampton argues against "ignor[ing] the hegemonic impress of a polarising cultural binary that has been long and intimately linked to class systems" (79). In his study, Rampton found that British youth, in shifting their style between "posh" and "Cockney" influenced varieties of English, were in fact strongly conscious of class and socio-economic distinctions in doing so. Indeed, as one 2008 Telegraph article shows, the class distinctions associated with the sociophonetic variation Rampton described do not represent a sterile, academic issue, or even a repressive but unspoken ideology. Highlighting a poll of linguistic attitudes headlined, "Amy Winehouse and David Beckham have UK's Most Hated Accents," the Telegraph makes clear the public's disdain for Winehouse's speech style as it blithely concludes: "Cockney voice[s] are the most hated regional accents." Whether for youth shifting their speech style or for soccer or musical celebrities, employing the sociophonetic traits of Cockney English invokes the public disdain and "hate" clearly evidenced in the British

linguistic practices continue to be denigrated and underappreciated by Whites, particularly in educational institutions?" (p. 66).

media. This act consequently indexes an emergent⁸ identity that actively resists the prescripts and conventions of dominant linguistic forms and the socioeconomic class identities they index. Thus, though Winehouse doesn't belong to the BASC, her affiliation with the Cockney speech community situates her within a similarly emergent language space that parallels the space of the BASC in which Hip Hop originated.

As Hip Hop travels ever farther afield from the BASC of its origins, bringing with it its indexically rich phonological traits, authenticity within Hip Hop is constantly being re-localized and redefined (Pennycook, 2007; Pennycook & Mitchell 2009). Pennycook (2007) has found an ongoing tension in the question of whether "to be authentic one needs to stick to one's 'own' cultural and linguistic traditions" (101). Thus, the question arises, is it possible index affiliation with Hip Hop through sociophonetic variation without simultaneously indexing the very inauthenticity that is antithetical to Hip Hop? Following similar lines of questioning posed by Trudgill, Sweetland (2002) seeks to define "what it means for speakers to use a voice, dialect, or language that doesn't belong to them" according to standing regional, ethnic, national, and other sociolinguistic categorical frameworks (p. 516). Sweetland comes to the conclusion that the issue of "inauthentic language" has to be wholly reinterpreted. For Sweetland, to make sense of a speaker "who makes fluent, regular use of a dialect associated

⁸ I use *emergent* in the sense of Raymond Williams' (1977) schema of ideological power relations.

with an ethnic group that she would never check off on a census form” (p. 516), rigid categorical frameworks must be discarded. For Alim (2009), this logic extends to the formation and interpretation of identities, which are inextricably tied to and created through language. Citing Bucholtz and Hall (2004), Alim (2009) challenges the notion of “identities as static and prefigured” and instead argues that all identity is essentially performative and socially constructed through “an ongoing social and political process” (p. 104). Thus Alim (2009) does not see incorporating linguistic elements which index Hip Hop affiliation as a question of conflict or inauthenticity, but as an indexical tool through which speakers construct and perform their identities, redefining themselves through the expression of linguistic and other patterns that index affiliation with Hip Hop. Hip Hop artists thus constantly seek a balance point amidst “the tension between a cultural dictate to keep it real and the processes that make this dependent on local contexts” as they bring together phonetic characteristics of their local and the broader Hip Hop communities to index their own unique identity within Hip Hop culture (Pennycook, 2007 p. 101).

Methods

The data analyzed includes a recording of a performance of the song “You Know I’m No Good” obtained from YouTube. The YouTube recording is of non-vetted origin and of somewhat poor audio quality, but provided a vocal-track-only recording of sufficient quality for the categorization of phonetic variables. The description of the track on the hosting YouTube page lists it as “from the German

Promo LP.” The original file was uploaded to YouTube September 17, 2011 by username “simasf” who, also via YouTube, hosts a fairly extensive collection of either unique or relatively rare video and audio recordings of Amy Winehouse. The data also includes a 2004 interview of Amy Winehouse by Jonathan Ross, then host of the British variety show *Friday Night with Jonathan Ross* on the station BBC One, a late night comedy and variety show. Both files were obtained for analysis using the YouTube video to mp3 converter tool made available by www.flvto.com.

Audacity was used to segment relevant audio clips which were then analyzed through Praat to produce spectrograms. Three consonant variables were examined, intervocalic /t/ followed by an unstressed syllable, postvocalic //, and postvocalic /r/. These particular variables were chosen for a variety of reasons. Primarily, they were chosen due to their distribution across the BASC (and thus Hip Hop), Winehouse’s “Cockney” speech community, and the WASC. This allowed for a contrastive rather than purely descriptive analysis that could investigate the nexus and interplay of different speech communities beneath the umbrella of Hip Hop. Secondly, the variables figure saliently within the song analyzed within choral lines that are repeated throughout and thus provided multiple instantiations for analysis and a larger data pool than other potential variables. Finally, while my true interest in Winehouse’s phonological production lies in my perception of the quality of her vowels, the variables selected provided a more approachable avenue of analysis for the apprentice phoneticist.

Intervocalic /t/ was analyzed in terms of stop length, with stops lasting less than 50 milliseconds (ms) being classified as alveolar flaps. A fully-fledged flap-length profile was not developed following the model of Herd, Jongman, and Srenواس (2010), but the longest flap measured was only 44 ms, the shortest 25 ms, and stops not judged to be flaps ranged in length from 67 to 101 ms. The basic rule followed then was to classify /t/s as flaps if they were less than 50 ms, and as [t] or [d] if they were longer than 60 ms, with no tokens presenting an ambiguous middle ground. Stop length was not calculated to differentiate instances of glottal stops from flaps as the length varied significantly, the audible differences were virtually unmistakable, and there was no overlapping of the categories within the data.

Vocalization of /l/ was determined based upon aural perception, lack of diminishment of the amplitude of the waveform, and clarity of the formant distribution. The few instances judged to represent non-vocalized /l/ were clear instances in which a diminishment of the clarity of the distribution of the formants was clearly observable in addition to a clear reduction in the amplitude of the waveform relative to the surrounding vowels.

R-lessness and *r-fullness* were determined by the reduction or maintenance of the third formant, but also with consideration of reduction of the amplitude of the wave form due to approximate constriction of the vocal track, informed by aural perceptual judgments made to confirm the appearance of third formant dropping within the spectrogram as *r-fullness*.

Findings

Variation of Intervocalic /t/

Table 3-1, below, lists the seven tokens of intervocalic /t/ which appeared within the recording of “You Know I’m No Good.” All were judged to be alveolar flaps with the exception of “notice” in line 30 which was produced as a voiced dental stop. Representative spectrographic figures are reproduced below as Figure 3-1, showing “pitta” of line 17, and Figure 3-2, showing the “cheated” of line 22. One instance of intervocalic /t/ occurred in the singing data as a velar ejective, shown in the spectrogram below as Figure 3-3.

Table 3-1

Duration of Intervocalic /t/ in “You Know I’m No Good”

word token (line #)	duration of /t/ ms
pita (17)	44
bitter (19)	25
cheated (9)	40
cheated (22)	34
cheated (34)	44
cheated (38)	38
notice (30)	101

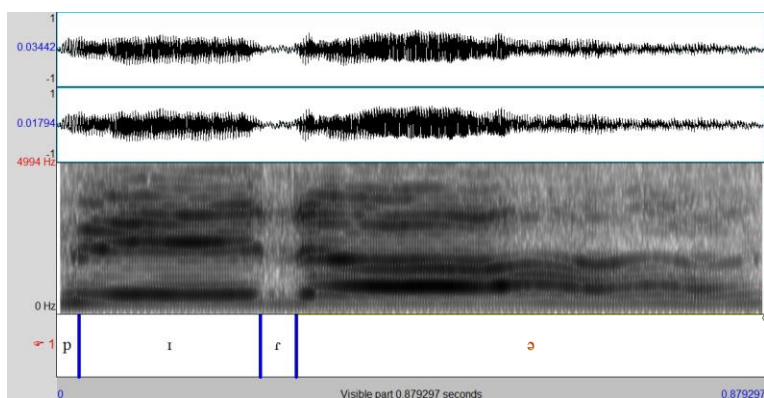


Figure 3-1. “Pitta” of line 17 (song).

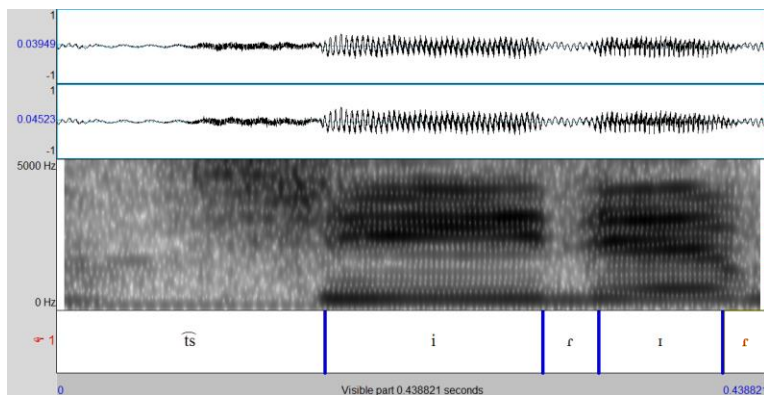


Figure 3-2. “Cheated” of line 22 (song).

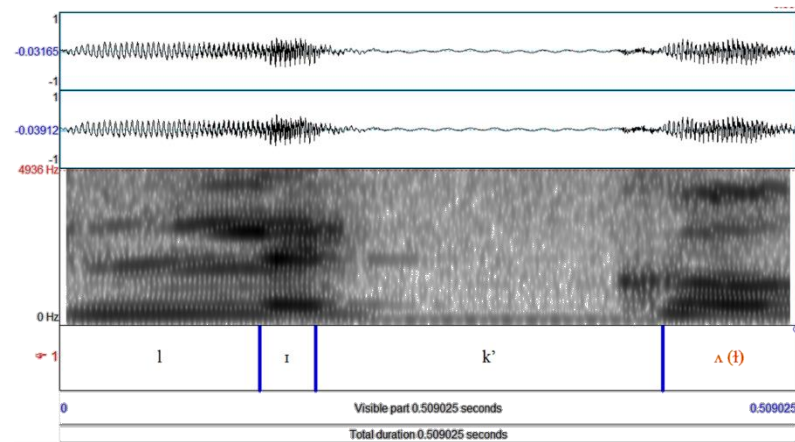


Figure 3-3. “Little” of line 30 (song).

Only two tokens of intervocalic /t/ occurred in the spoken data taken from the interview, one within the word “little” on line 75, the other occurred in the phrase “a lot of” of line 15. While the /t/ of this token does not occur in an intervocalic position within a single word, its production in the string of speech functioned within an intervocalic context between the vowels of “lot” and of” and thus the token was included in the data. Both tokens, “little” and “a lot of,” appear below in Figure 3-4 and Figure 3-5, respectively.

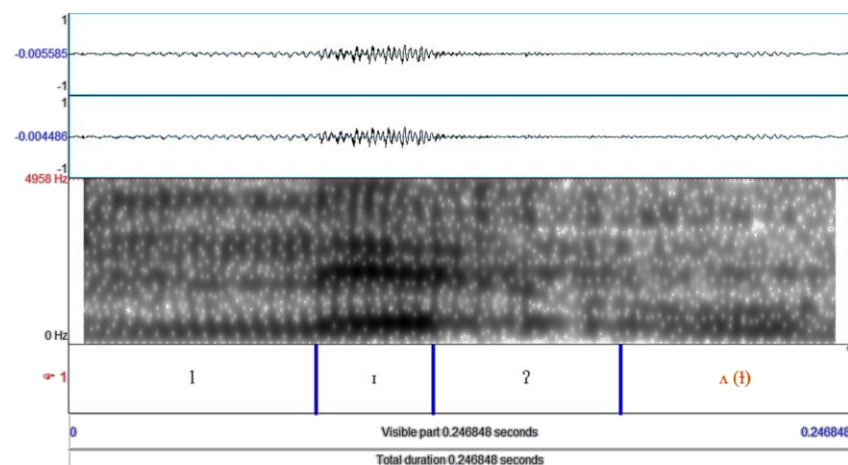


Figure 3-4. “Little” of line 75 (interview).

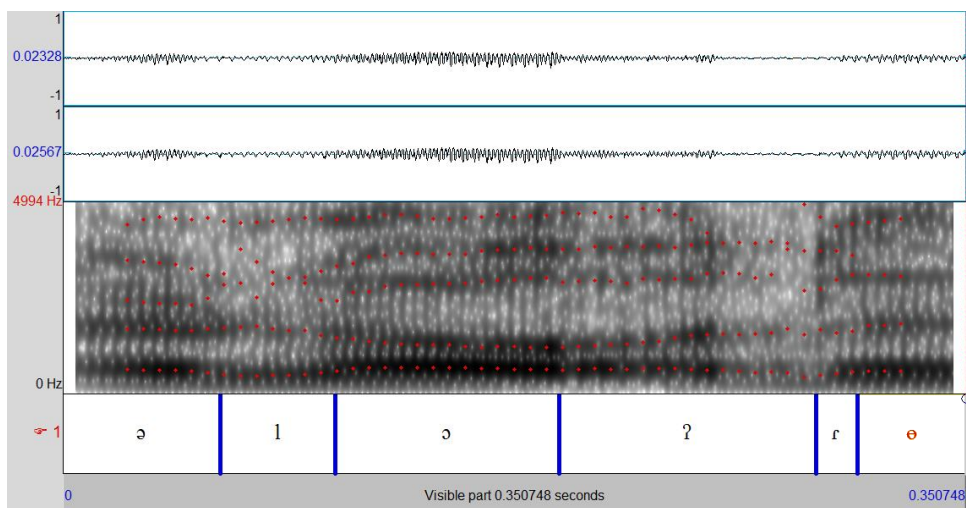


Figure 3-5. “A lot of” of line 15 (interview).

Vocalization of Postvocalic /l/

Table 3-2, below, includes the fifteen tokens of postvocalic /l/ that

occurred in “You Know I’m No Good,” all of which were vocalized. In contrast, Table 3-2, also below, contains the fourteen tokens of postvocalic /l/ that occurred in the interview, eleven of which were vocalized and three of which were produced as a velarized or “dark l”. Representative spectrograms appear from each data set below. Figure 3-6 shows “trouble” of line 11 and Figure 3-7 “folk” of line 19.

Table 3-2

Vocalized Tokens of Postvocalic /l/ in “You Know I’m No Good”

Word Token (line #)			
myself (9)	told (11)	trouble (11)	rolled (2)
myself (22)	told (24)	trouble (24)	skull (2)
myself (34)	told (36)	trouble (36)	there’ll (20)
myself (38)	told (40)	trouble (40)	

Table 3-3

Tokens of Postvocalic /l/ in Interview

vocalized /l/ (line #)		/l/ → [ɫ] (line #)
call (15)	well (32)	people (1)
album (18)	well (41)	people (25)
folk (19)	simple (44)	already (74)
heartfelt (22)	mold (70)	-
all (28)	style (73)	-
myself (28)	-	-

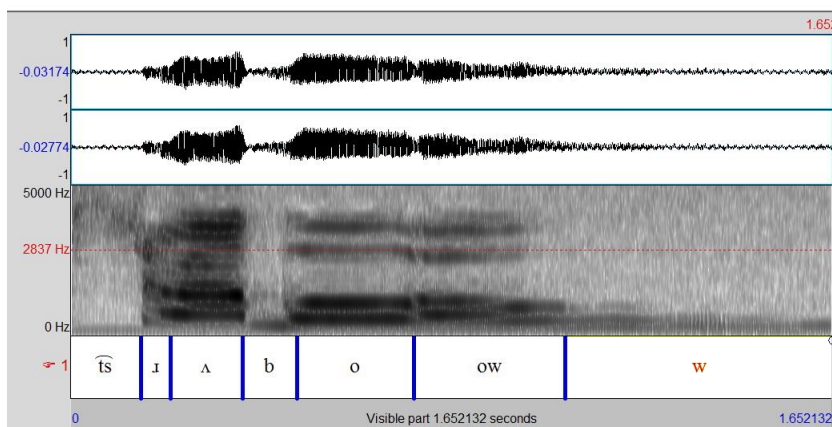


Figure 3-6. “Trouble” of line 11 (song).

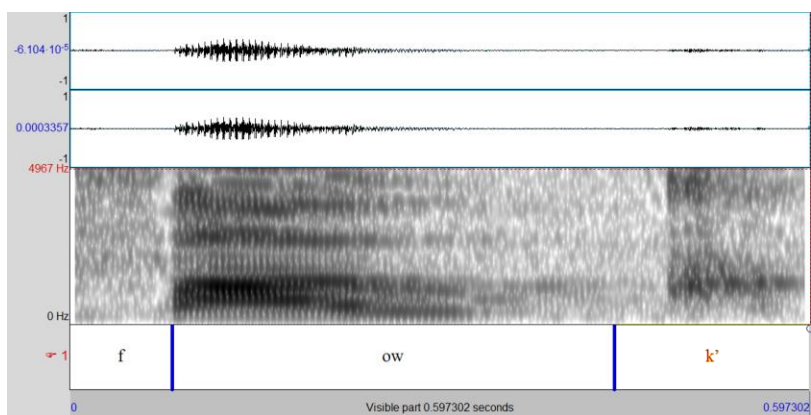


Figure 3-7. “Folk” of line 19 (interview).

Variation in Postvocalic /r/

Table 3-4, below, contains all tokens of postvocalic /r/ that occurred in “you Know I’m No Good.” Nine total tokens occurred with a distinguishable *r-full*

quality, while ten tokens occurred in an *r-less* form providing a complementary distribution of *r-full* and *r-less* production. Within the spoken interview data, displayed below in Table 3-5, nine tokens of *r-less* production occurred while two *r-full* tokens occurred. Tokens that occurred within a word but which initiated a following syllable of the same word were omitted both in the data from the song and the interview, of which there were a total of three tokens, one in the singing data and two in the spoken data. All were produced in an *r-full* form. From “You Know I’m No Good,” a spectrogram of “bitter” (line 19) and “floor” (line 21) are reproduced below as Figure 3-8 and Figure 3-9, respectively. As Figure 3-10, a spectrogram of “guitar” (line 28 of the interview) is given below.

Table 3-4

Tokens of Postvocalic /r/ in “You Know I’m No Good”

<i>r-full</i>		<i>r-less</i>	
bar (1)	bitter (19)	downstairs (1)	more (20)
hurt (1)	carpet (30)	your (2)	floor (21)
shirt (2)	worst (32)	you’re (5)	for (21)
door (7)	first (33)	your (6)	we’re (27)
you’re (19)	-	Moore (8)	your (29)

Table 3-5

Tokens of Postvocalic /r/ in Interview

<i>r-full</i>	<i>r-less</i>	
there (19)	are (15)	you're (44)
or (34)	heartfelt (22)	driver (58)
-	guitar (28)	there (75)
-	never (32)	heard (88)
-	never (44)	-

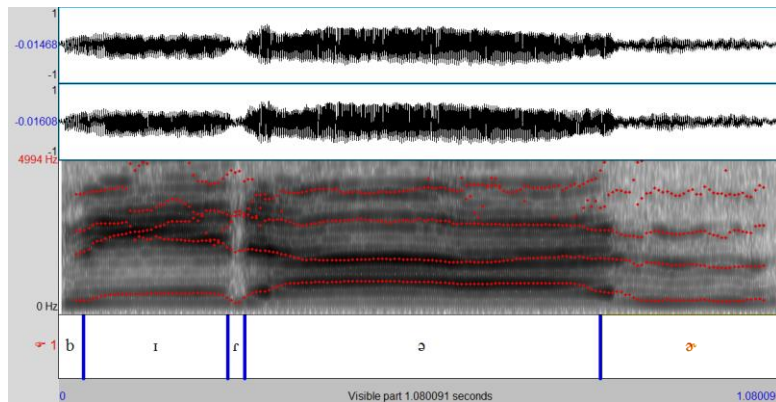


Figure 3-8. “Bitter” of line 19 (song).

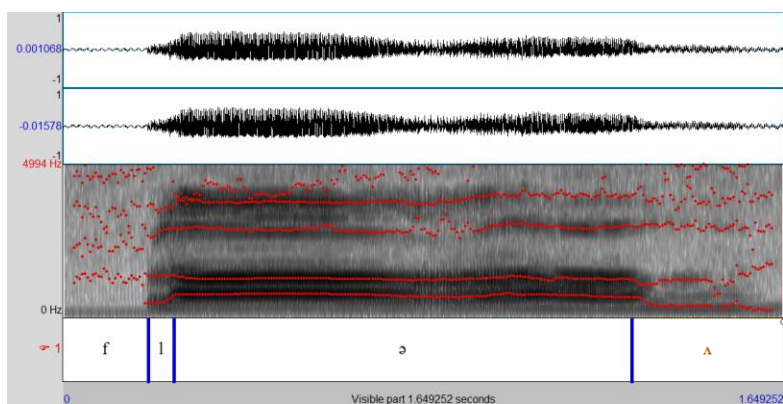


Figure 3-9. “Floor” of line 21 (song).

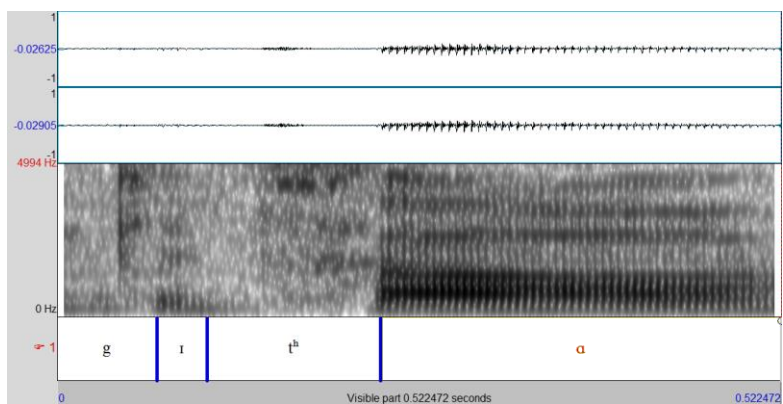


Figure 3-10. “Guitar” of line 28 (interview).

Discussion

The significance of the difference in the distribution of variation of intervocalic /t/ between the signing and spoken data is diminished by the low number of tokens occurring in the spoken data. With only two tokens occurring, it

is impossible to assert a pattern. Regardless, it stands that both tokens in the spoken data were glottal stops while none of the tokens in the signing were produced as such. Citing Johansson & Ronnerdal (1993), Carlsson notes that American pronunciations of /t/ are not unique but rather that a “voiced /t/-sound in intervocalic positions is quite prominent also in British (English) English, not least in e.g., Cockney” (p. 164). Wells (1984) also cites intervocalic /t/ production as taps or flaps as “familiar as an Americanism, but... by no means uncommon in England,” particularly in “Cockney.” Citing Silverstein, Wells further notes that “many Cockneys regard [it] as the ‘normal, “correct” variant’ (Silverstein, 1960: 119), as opposed to the ‘posh’ [t^s] and the ‘rough’ [ʔ]” (p. 56). Thus, Winehouse’s production of intervocalic /t/ while singing as [ɾ] can be understood as ambiguously appearing as both Cockney and American, but decidedly not as the “rough” [ʔ]. With more spoken speech data, it might be possible to assert her singing pronunciation of intervocalic /t/ as a pattern of Americanizing the consonant relative to her speech, perhaps as an intentional indexical reference to American pop-stardom as previous studies have found of British singers. At least, her singing pronunciation of intervocalic /t/ is not the stereotypical Cockney [ɾ] that Wells cites as “rough.” Importantly, her production of /t/ is within the normal range of variables available to the Cockney speech community, even if it cannot be determined from this limited data set whether she remains “authentic” to her own more habitual pronunciation patterns in spoken contexts. Indeed, as Di Paolo and Yaeger-Dror (2011) argue, it is largely unproductive to try to draw

contrastive conclusions when comparing speech within very different contexts. Nonetheless, Winehouse's employment of [r] represents an indexically rich, yet ambiguous variable. Through its use, she simultaneously (1) indexes herself as an artist of star status by using a form of /t/ associated with well-known stars of American popular music, and (2) avoids indexing affiliation with "posh" British identities by disassociating her pronunciation with the /t/ more common to "prestigious" British production patterns, while (3) maintaining "authentic" consistency with the Cockney speech community. While an indexical analysis cannot pinpoint the exact whys of Winehouse's distribution of /t/ as Alim's (2006) experimental model was able to, the nexus of associations and indexical potentialities in this instance reveal the complexity of the indexical web available to speakers and their interlocutors and further defies simplistic, categorical understandings of identity and phonetic variation.

One anomaly of Winehouse's production of /t/ in the singing data is the production of a velar ejective in the word "little". It is unclear whether this might represent a lexically defined pattern. Some anecdotal evidence points to encounters with Jamaican influenced English in London that might account for the "likkle" variation.

Compared to the speaking data, postvocalic /l/ in the singing data provides a much clearer comparative story than that of the intervocalic /t/. Winehouse displays a much stronger tendency to produce the vocalized version of /l/ than the "dark" velar version in both data sets, representing a point of near perfect

consistency from her speech to her musical performance. In this sense, she indexes Hip Hop authenticity via maintaining consistency between her local spoken language variety and her signing pronunciation patterns. This has particular significance in that the vocalized /l/ does not represent a prestigious variant within the spread of British English dialectal varieties (Santipolo, 2000; Taylor & Walter, 1998; Wells, 1984). Thus, Winehouse also further indexes a kind of “street-conscious” authenticity as someone not “posh,” but rather as someone “common” as Johnathan Ross explicitly addresses within the interview saying, “it’s so refreshing to hear someone who isn’t speaking like they’ve taken elocution lessons (lines 78-79). In addition to indexing authenticity by maintaining consistency with the Cockney speech community, however, her employment of this variable also manages to index affiliation with Hip Hop as this variant is strongly associated with the BASC and the language of Hip Hop, Soul, R & B, etc., which have their linguistic and musical roots in the BASC (Green, 2002, p. 119). Here again Winehouse finds herself, as with intervocalic /t/, in a nexus of phonetic convergence and convenience. She is able to authentically index both affiliation with Hip Hop and her local Cockney identity without having to do much in the way of explicitly re-localizing Hip Hop phonetic elements as Pennycook (2007) found in the speech of other non-American Hip Hop artists. This variable thus again highlights the complexity of indexical fields which overlap and coalesce, compete and confuse, but it also points to one potential facet of Winehouse’s Hip Hop success: she has no need to “fake” or appropriate

sociophonetic variables associated with Hip Hop because they are already conveniently available to her within the Cockney speech community.

Winehouse's authenticity with regard to the vocalization of /l/ is not solely constructed via her sociophonetic overlap with Hip Hop language patterns, but it is also affirmed by other indexical fields associated with this variable, particularly within the context of this song. It is important to reemphasize that vocalized /l/ indexes similarly emergent/transgressive identities in both American and British dominant linguistic ideological schemas because its use indexes affiliation with low-prestige identities and thus demonstrates a resistance against conformity to the prescripts of dominant linguistic forces. This is of particular significance within the context of "You Know I'm No Good" because the vocalized /l/ appears in one of the most significant words of the choral line, communicating a central theme the song: "I told you I was trouble." Thus Winehouse provides an explicit explanation of the cheating behavior that is the impetus of the song by arguing against reactions of surprise or scandal. She asserts that she has already communicated that she simply is the way she is, implying that no further explanation should be needed. The low-prestige /l/ vocalization she employs pairs with her self-deprecating assessment within dominant stereotypes of low prestige speakers, further constructing a low-prestige/high-prestige complex that constructs Hip Hop authenticity via affiliation with low-prestige identities associated with "street-consciousness". The central choral positioning of this variable within the song means that it is also repeated throughout, thus it not only

plays a major role within the poetic argument but also significantly contributes to the acoustic construction of one of the song's most repeated and thus salient phrases which then saliently and repeatedly connects to its rich indexical complexes. Winehouse's employment of this variable thus makes full use of the indexical field of this variable, and clearly an alternative pronunciation would have significant ripple effects on the singer's positioning within the web of meanings the song weaves together.

The distribution of postvocalic /r/ in Winehouse's speech and singing constructs a somewhat more complicated story. She clearly produces a more rhotic distribution of /r/ in her singing than in her speech, perhaps indicating ties to the same kinds of trends that Trudgill (1983) found in British pop artists of previous eras, but in contrast with those described by Carlsson (DATE) in more recent years. While it is possible that Winehouse is attempting to index connection to American-style pop-stardom in her singing style, for it is starkly inconsistent with the non-rhotic distribution in her speech, in context of her Hip Hop affiliation, Cutler's (2007) work might suggest an alternative analysis. Though her production counter the kinds of authenticity constructed by her production of vocalic /l/, it might seek to maintain authenticity by serving as a marker of her not belonging to the BASC. As Cutler (2007) found, strongly rhotacized /r/ production can mark Hip Hop artists as White and counter potential accusations of appropriation or inauthentic attempts at imitating the BASC. If that were the case, the complex overlap of indexical fields evident in her production of

/l/ would similarly come into play in her production of /r/. It would be ironic if in order to maintain authenticity as a Hip Hop artists without roots in the BASC, she sought to modify her own rhotic production away from a pattern that happens to overlap with that of the BASC to one that doesn't. Thus what some would categorize as inauthentic modification would help mark her as an authentic artist. Further research in the rhotic production of other Hip Hop artists should be undertaken to determine whether strong rhotic production has arisen as a somewhat universal indexical tool to index affiliation within Hip Hop while maintaining space from the BASC. Were this to be the case, her Cockney roots would provide a fascinating case study in how the overlapping of features consistent with the BASC can simultaneously work for and against the creation of authenticity for Hip Hop artists perceived to be White or otherwise not authentic members of the BASC that has provided the linguistic foundation of phonetic features that index Hip Hop affiliation.

As an alternative explanation, it should be noted that Winehouse's production of /r/ does not represent strong rhotic instances of unambiguous approximants, but would be better characterized as slightly rhotacized vowels. It is possible that she is employing a kind of middle-way pronunciation and thus seeking to navigate some middle indexical ground without wholesale identification with any particular indexical field of *r-fullness*. Significantly, it is also important to note that her rhotacization may be a byproduct of the pressure to achieve intelligibility of the lyrics. Following the classical Labovian model, it

should be noted that within the context of artistic musical performance, much greater attention is paid to pronunciation than in casual or formal speaking contexts. Consequently, it should be expected that speakers might be more conservative in their pronunciations. Particularly in the recording studio context where every facet can be closely scrutinized to produce a high-stakes fossilized record, artists have to navigate difficult choices of diction to balance their speaking and singing styles against the risk of music consumers misconstruing their lyrics. It shouldn't be assumed that singers bring with them to their singing the same variants they employ in their daily contexts. Furthermore, misinterpretations of British vocal artists often become rich fodder for American comedians. One example which in fact pivots on rhoticity was made famous by the character Phoebe Buffay of *Friends*. In one episode, she is set up as the butt of a joke because of her misinterpretation of British singer Elton John's lyric "Hold me closer tiny dancer" as "hold me closer Tony Danza." Issues of authenticity, diction, and artistic aesthetic aside, it would be perfectly reasonable for British singers looking towards an American audience to want to avoid the potential for comedic immortality. Returning to Winehouse's specific variant production in the context of such an analysis, it is not clear why vocalized, non-rhotic production of /r/ would be treated any differently than vocalized production of /l/, but perhaps /r/-lessness has become more saliently linked with British pronunciations and misinterpretations.

These findings demonstrate Winehouse's negotiation of her Hip Hop and

White British non-posh identities. Winehouse's spoken and singing language thus represent a re-localizing of Hip Hop's demand for authenticity within her particular British context. The integration of features of the BASC, WASC, and Winehouse's regional British dialectic indicate that phonetic features can index a redefinition of authenticity as forms of talk, such as Hip Hop, gain ownership in new contexts. Thus, as Winehouse creates and performs a uniquely British Hip Hop identity, she synthesizes her various communities' overlapping phonetic markers of authenticity into a newly remixed form. Much as the remixing of others' music through sampling has become a defining feature of the Hip Hop genre, Winehouse samples the phonetic markers of authenticity of Hip Hop's canonical origins in the BASC and her own British dialect to create a new but familiar reinterpretation of how an authentic British Hip Hop artist speaks. While Winehouse's use of non-rhotic postvocalic /r/ in spoken language, rhotic postvocalic /r/ in singing language, and categorical use of vocalized postvocalic /r/ serve as recognizable markers of authenticity within the bounds of separate speech communities, it is through their very Hip Hop recombination that Winehouse performs her own uniquely authentic Hip Hop identity.

APPENDIX A
LYRICS OF "YOU KNOW I'M NO GOOD"

Lyrics written by Amy Winehouse (2006, track 2):

1 Meet you downstairs in the bar and hurt,
2 Your rolled up sleeves in your skull t-shirt,
3 You say what did you do with him today?
4 And sniff me out like I was Tanqueray,
5 'Cause you're my fella my guy,
6 Hand me your Stella and fly,
7 By the time I'm out the door,
8 You tear men down like Roger Moore,
9 I cheated myself,
10 Like I knew I would,
11 I told you I was trouble,
12 You know that I'm no good,
13 Upstairs in bed with my ex-boy,
14 He's in a place but I can't get joy,
15 Thinking on you in the final throes,
16 This is when my buzzer goes,
17 Run out to meet you, chips and pitta,
18 You say "when we married",
19 'cause you're not bitter,
20 "There'll be none of him no more,"
21 I cried for you on the kitchen floor,
22 I cheated myself,
23 Like I knew I would,
24 I told you I was trouble,
25 You know that I'm no good,
26 Sweet reunion Jamaica and Spain,
27 We're like how we were again,
28 I'm in the tub, you on the seat,
29 Lick your lips as I soap my feet,
30 Then you notice likkle carpet burn,
31 My stomach drop and my guts churn,
32 You shrug and it's the worst,
33 Who truly stuck the knife in first
34 I cheated myself,
35 Like I knew I would,
36 I told ya I was trouble,
37 You know that I'm no good,
38 I cheated myself,
39 Like I knew I would,
40 I told you I was trouble,
41 Yeah, you know that I'm no good.

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

The following was transcribed from an interview of Amy Winehouse by Jonathan Ross on March 19th, 2004 uploaded to YouTube by user simasf on September 17, 2011.

1 Amy Winehouse: I'm from South Gate,
2 I was born.. in North London
3 and um, yeah I'm a jazz singer ya know that's what I come
4 from.. even
5 though I am, I am really young.

6 Jonathan Ross: Yeah twenty years old, why, why turn on to Jazz.
7 Most people your age I would guess and
8 I I hope I'm not just spouting a cliché or generalization there
9 But I suspect it's true.
10 Most youngsters, when they start singing
11 they want to do R and B, or do Rock n' Roll,
12 or even Hip Hop or RAP or something,

13 Amy Winehouse: [Yeah

14 Jonathan Ross: but going] into jazz, it does seem to be quite a new trend
15 now
16 there's quite a few new sort of jazz voices on the scene

17 Amy Winehouse: Yeah I wouldn't call a lot of people that are doing jazz,
18 jazz singers [you know, I mean

19 Jonathan Ross: OK]

18 Amy Winehouse: umm, my album's a kind of straight.. jazz hip hop..
cross.
19 There is no... blues, or folk,
20 you know, I mean it's just a straight jazz Hip Hop [album
21 Jonathan Ross: right]
22 Amy Winehouse: and a lot of the stuff out doesn't,.. it's not.. heartfelt?
23 Jonathan Ross: yeah
24 Amy Winehouse: and you know, I just wanted to write music that was
emotional and that,...
25 people would, want to listen to [and connect with
26 Jonathan Ross: do you you] and you write it all
yourself
27 [or your write with someone
28 Amy Winehouse: mmm] I write all the lyrics myself, I write on the
guitar=
29 Jonathan Ross: =ok. umm, what are the songs about then
30 if people haven't heard the album yet
31 what kind of subjects do we deal with here?=
32 Amy Winehouse: =umm well I always said I never wanted to write about
love
33 and then I did that anyway,

34 I've got maybe seven or eight songs? [that are about this guy
35 Jonathan Ross: but you kinda] is that your ex-boyfriend you're talking about
this?=
36 Amy Winehouse: =yep
37 Jonathan Ross: man, now I wouldn't want to be an ex-boyfriend of yours.
38 I mean I'm sure it's a fun ride while it lasts
39 but afterwards then you get the album coming out
40 because you're kinda, you're quite hard on him I feel.
41 Amy Winehouse: well: I was very frustrated at the way things turned out
with me
42 and him as he was (h)
43 and you know when umm::
44 you're quite emotionally tied into someone it's never.. that..
simple
45 Jonathan Ross: yeah. you call him a ladyboy at one stage in the album
46 Amy Winehouse: [laughs]
47 Jonathan Ross: there's something no one wants to be called
48 even if you are a ladyboy I suspect
49 uhh, you're you're very confident young woman I've noticed.
50 Have you always been.. kinda this self-possessed?
51 Amy Winehouse: that umm::... [yeah::

52 Jonathan Ross: no I mean that nicely] I mean you know you
just
53 I'm surprised is and its a good thing..
54 do you get it from your mum, your dad? I [mean
55 Amy Winehouse: I don't know]
56 my, no my dad's quite outspoken
57 Jonathan Ross: mhhmm
58 Amy Winehouse: He's a cab driver
59 Jonathan Ross: Oh well that's, that's, say no more
60 Amy Winehouse: Yeah?
61 Jonathan Ross: That's it, and has he got a picture of you in the cab now?
62 Does he lean back? Does he try and flog your album to
people in the taxi?
63 Amy Winehouse: I don't think so
64 Jonathan Ross: Uhh you're managed by the company..
65 uhh and this surprised me I only found this out today,
66 you're managed by the company who look after S Club 7,
67 used to look after the the Spice Girls Simon Fuller..
68 have they tried to to mold you in any that people ask you to
do things
69 to change the way you look or speak or behave?

70 Amy Winehouse: umm, yeah. One of them tried to mold me into a big triangle shape

71 and I went.. no::.

72 No. You know I've got my own style,

73 (audience laughing) I've got my own style and I I write my own songs

74 and you know, if someone has so much of something already

75 there's very little you can... add.

76 Jonathan Ross: Yeah. You know what I like about you as well is

77 you sound so common. (audience laughs)

78 because I am common and it's like, you know,

79 it's so refreshing to hear someone who isn't speaking like

80 they've taken elocution lessons.

81 Amy Winehouse: Yeah.

82 Jonathan Ross: Yeah.

83 Amy Winehouse: They gave me elocution lessons but they kind of shhh ((motioning away and behind her back))

84 Jonathan Ross: They, they didn't [stick?

85 Amy Winehouse: off,] off my back yeah.

86 Jonathan Ross: Amy, you're you're you're good to go?

87 You OK to sing for us now, what track are you going to do?

88 Amy Winehouse: I'm going to sing a song called "I Heard Love is Blind"

89 Jonathan Ross: This is on the album

90 Amy Winehouse: [yeah

91 Jonathan Ross: the album] is called Frank, uhh, if you haven't heard it yet,

92 umm give it a listen, I suggest you get a copy I think it's
terrific.

93 Ladies and gentleman she's gunna sing for us live right now,
94 Amy Winehouse. (audience applause)

Thanks Amy. That's fantastic

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